

*THE LIFE IN THE VINE*



# *THE LIFE IN THE VINE*

By

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*"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."*



NEW YORK  
Fleming H. Revell Company  
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

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New York: 158 Fifth Avenue  
London: 21 Paternoster Square

## *FOREWORD*

THERE is nothing written here that my wife and I do not know of our own experience in the world and with God.

I had wandered into a far country and did not find real happiness there. That country seemed very attractive at times, but it was never permanently satisfying.

I found that happiness was not an "art," and that it could not be gained by "conquest."

As a man of the world, I found pleasure and laughter, misery and despair, esthetic beauty and stark ugliness, comedy and tragedy. Life, as I lived it, seemed very real, but I have since learned that it was only the shadow of reality.

I became lost in that country and realized that I never had been, and never could be, all that I knew I should be as of myself.

I turned to the Father. It took me a long while to find Him, but after much stumbling, He reached for me when I surrendered my will to Him.

He has given me Power which I never had before. In following His leadership, I have been brought to a different plane, and have found that which satisfies. With Him there is security, peace and joy. Happiness is an inadequate word for it.

My wife and I have crossed the Bridge and have found God. We have had *experiences* with Him.

We know how we found Him. We know why we did not find Him before.

Each person must find God for himself.

He is guiding us in showing others *the way*.

No person can change lives. He is using us to guide lives to Him in order that He may change them.

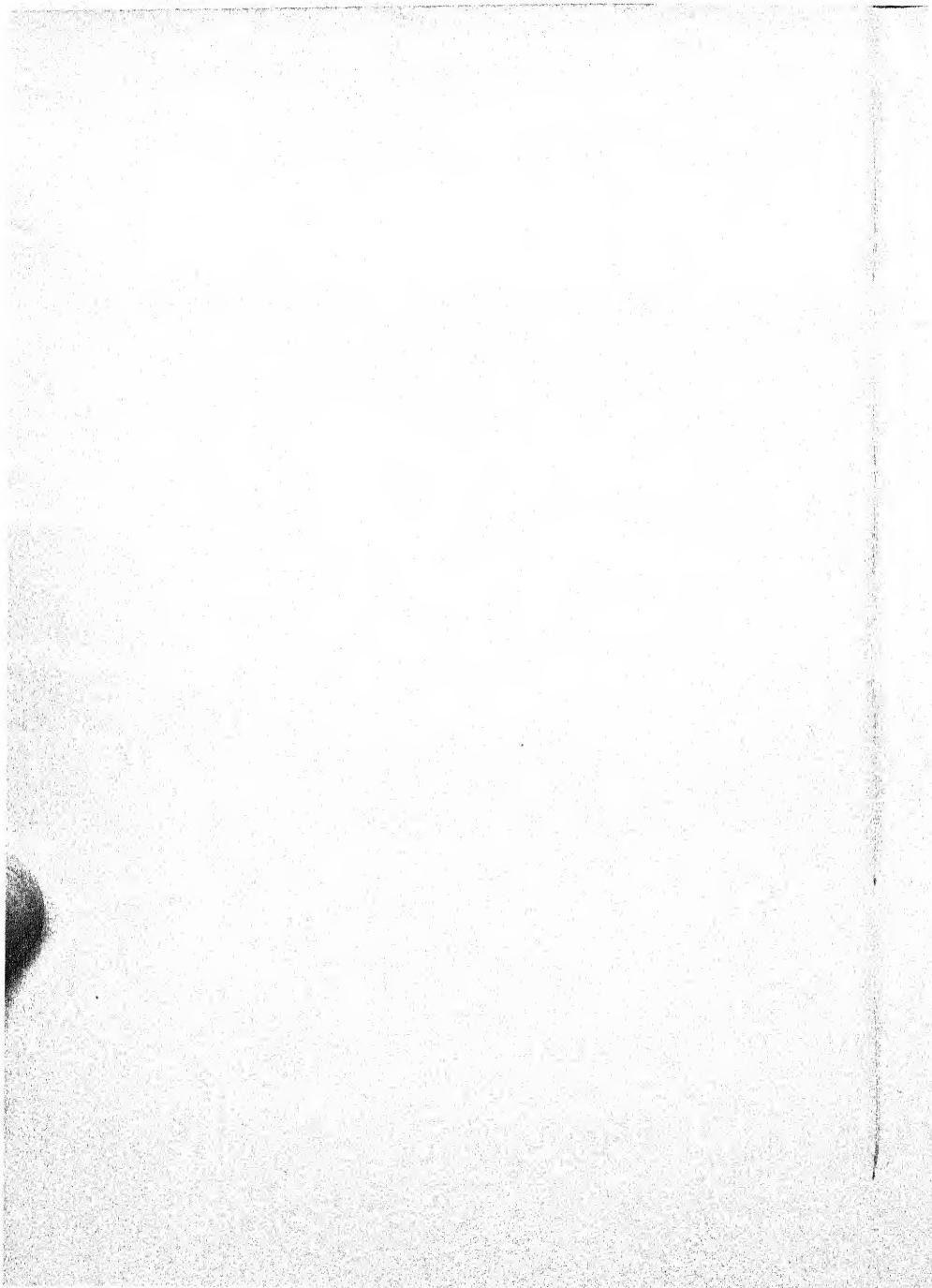
We have written this digest partly for our own use, and partly as a non-sectarian manual for those who are searching for God, and for those who are trying to do His will. It is distilled from seven thousand pages of notes made over a period of sixteen years.

The thoughts are not always in logical order, and we are deliberately repetitious, using many combinations of words to elucidate the main theme.

We suggest that the student use a section at a time as a basis for meditation.

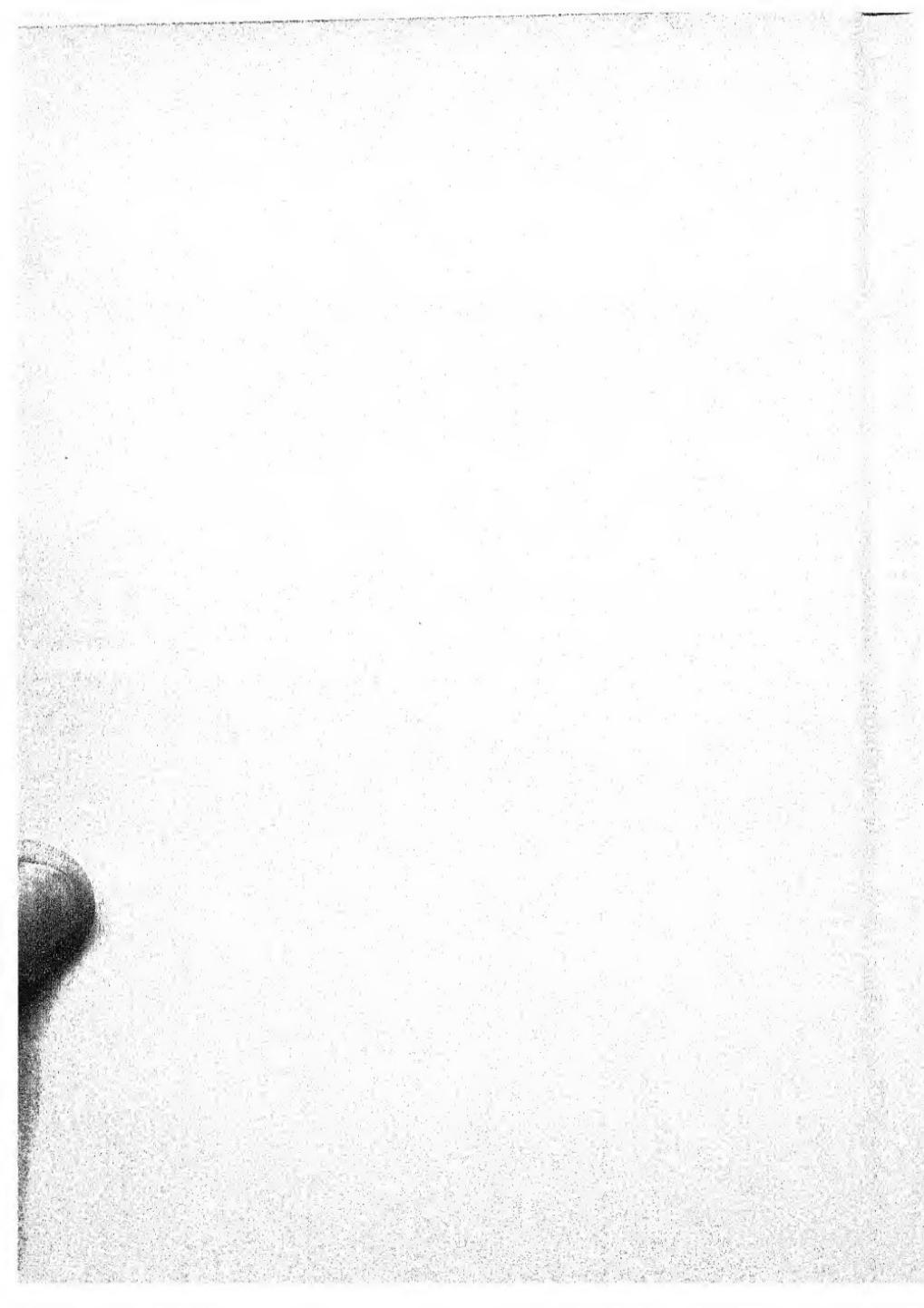
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## *THE OUTLOOK*

### I

A PERFECT world—the Garden of Eden—the Kingdom of Heaven—will only be realized when men and women are perfected.

### II

War and poverty will always be with us until man is changed. No treaties or social legislation can change man.

### III

Man cannot change himself. He can modify his type, but he cannot change it.

### IV

God is the cause; man the effect. Man is a manifested idea of God and can be changed only at the Source.

God will change man, if man will let Him.

## *THE PROBLEM*

V

MAN has not the Power to change himself.  
He can find this Power only by finding God.

VI

We cannot find God through the human  
senses or through mental processes.

VII

Our intelligence and our scholarship alone  
will not enable us to find Him. We must seek  
Him through other channels.

VIII

The finding of God is not any more mystical  
than many things about us that we regard as  
commonplace.

IX

The simplest way for most of us to find Him  
is by studying the life and teachings of Jesus  
Christ.

## *THE BIBLE*

### **X**

THE Bible is the Word of God. It is the story of God's progressive revelation to evolving man.

There are many interpretations of Genesis. Your belief as to the story of creation will not make any practical difference to you, provided you know you were *created* a Living Soul, and were *born* a human being.

It need not concern you whether man was made both of these at once, or whether he was created a Living Soul when he had evolved from the protoplasm.

### **XI**

In the Old Testament man became conscious of a supernatural power—of Truth beyond reach of the senses. God revealed Himself occasionally to individuals, and guided them in the use of force.

In the New Testament, God—The Christ—in the Person of Jesus, showed man that He is accessible to all of us. He gave us two com-

mandments: "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." He taught that man had evolved sufficiently to rely on the power of God and must neither use nor resist physical force.

#### XII

Adam was earth-bound and attempted to hide from God. He believed he had succeeded, and he was therefore necessarily limited within the bounds of his physical self. He fell. He left the Light and stumbled in the Darkness.

#### XIII

God spoke—gave a *conscience*—to Adam. Since then, man has had a guide in the course of his evolution—a guide which hastens his evolution if he listens and obeys.

#### XIV

Conscience is the faculty which speaks to us of the highest we know. It should never be disregarded. When enlightened by the life and teachings of Jesus, we can know that, through it, God is speaking to us.

#### XV

When we seem to "lose conscience," we are

really refusing to listen, and we often find that we are lost and going in the wrong direction.

XVI

Our conscience may become submerged. We may lose our sensitiveness to the voice of God.

XVII

He speaks to us in the same way in which we speak to Him—*in words*. He speaks to us by thoughts and ideas coming to us.

## *THE ANSWER*

### XVIII

You will find God when you are *willing* to do that which He tells you to do.

### XIX

*Being willing* is the Bridge—the Key—the Gate—the Way—the Path.

### XX

If you have not found Him—if you are in spiritual darkness—if you are spiritually blind—if you have a blind spot, you can know that there is something you are not willing to do, if He asks you to do it.

“Ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart”—when you are ready to say “Thy will be done.”

## *SELF-EXAMINATION*

### **XXI**

LISTEN to your conscience. Examine yourself.

God will help you if you ask Him.

See yourself as He sees you.

We are full of artful dodges as to seeing ourselves as we are.

Confess *before Him* every wrong thing you have done.

### **XXII**

If you try to pour new wine into old bottles they will break. You must get a new bottle. That is, you must clean out the old man.

This is where many fail. They assert that they are predominately their spiritual self before it has been unfolded.

It is anomalous to affirm that you are one with the Father, if there is anything you are not willing to do.

### **XXIII**

If you have been making your own plan for

your life—fighting your own fight—and asking His help as to your plan, abandon this.

Ask Him to make plain to you that which He wants you to do.

#### XXIV

He will give you one step to take at a time.

Your purpose should be to get acquainted with Him, and to learn His plan for you.

#### XXV

Realize His presence within you, and without you. Use your imagination to realize that He is always present. *Practice realizing His presence* constantly. This is what is meant by "pray without ceasing."

Your senses cannot find Him, but if you think of Him constantly, His presence will become more and more real to you.

#### XXVI

You cannot learn anything unless you have the *humility to listen*. Listen to Him. He will tell you—your conscience will tell you anything you are doing that is wrong, if you will give Him a chance.

Examine yourself *with Him*. Pray. Prayer

in religion can be like conversation in friendship. You probably know of the gross sins. Ask Him as to the others. Do not ask other people. Ask Him.

#### XXVII

He will tell you what you are doing that is wrong. He loves you. He wants to draw you above your mental physical self. He will give you wisdom if you will *let* Him.

*"Pray in the Holy Spirit."*

Stop your own thinking—*listen*. *Pray in* His Wisdom. He will help you in anyway you are failing, if you will *listen*.

#### XXVIII

He will give you the *power* to do things you could not do as of yourself. *Pray in* His Power to turn away from that which He tells you to leave. Ask Him to clean out impurities, dishonesties, hypocrisies, resentments. Ask Him to clear away all negative things so that the channel can be open to receive His Love, Wisdom and Power.

#### XXIX

*Turn to Him* and He will guide you into the special place He has waiting for you.

## XXX

Do not let any person map out a course of action for you. Let Him do it. Let Him guide you continuously.

Get your own thinking out of the way so that you can receive His thoughts.

There is no danger of your becoming a puppet. Your difficulty will be in getting your will and your fears out of the way and in *trusting* Him. Faith will come to you because of increasing confidence through experience.

If you nurture the seed of faith and *ask God to make it grow* into a tree it will do so.

## XXXI

Do not believe anything that is written here merely because we say it. Blind faith is not necessary. Try it out for yourself, and you will *understand* better than you can from anyone else. Regard that which is written here as a theory, and prove it for yourself by experimentation.

## XXXII

Insist that your intelligence be satisfied. But do not be afraid to try guidance that you believe comes from God. It may seem to you

to be contrary to common sense, but you will always find that He knows the course of action which is the best course for you.

#### xxxiii

You may not be sure whether the thoughts and ideas coming to you are from God or not. If you are in doubt, pray and wait. Talk to Him about it. Argue with Him if you must. Do not fight Him if you can help it. Pray. His will for you will be made plain to you. You *will know*. Obey and you will *understand*.

#### xxxiv

The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.

You can realize it here and now by having the imagination and humility to listen to God, and in having the courage to do that which He tells you to do.

*Pray in* the imagination. *Pray in* the humility. *Pray away* your will and fears. *Pray in* the faith that brings courage.

#### xxxv

If you are unhappy it is because you are not doing God's will in some way. If you are unhealthy, *suspect* that you are not doing His

will. Ask Him. Talk to Him about it. Examine yourself with the aid of the Great Physician. Ask for His diagnosis as to the cause of your illness. He may make a sin plain to you, and you may be healed if you go and sin no more. Realize the Great Power available for you. Realize He loves you. *Pray in His love and power.*

Words of affirmation while you are still "of the dust" may only cover you with more layers of self-deception. "It is when we are humble that God comes to us."—Phillips Brooks.

## *THE NEW MAN*

JESUS: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."

Nicodemus: "How can a man be born when he is old?"

Jesus: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit."

\* \* \*

The Old Man: "We are made as the filth of the world. . . . I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you."

The New Man: "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." "Ye are gods."

### **xxxvi**

When you have turned to God, and have with His help forsaken your old self—the "old man,"—forget him. This is your rebirth. Ask God to hold you firmly in your new life. Never think of the past. Stand and walk. Having recognized your unworthiness as a son of man,

believe in your worthiness as a son of God. Affirm that which you have become.

#### XXXVII

If you live with God as your companion—as your partner—doing His will, you can ask that which you will. The greater your intimacy with God, the happier your life. To Jesus, He was the Father. When you go to Him as your Father, He gives you the power to overcome the earthly nature, which is the heritage of all of us. He makes possible that which is impossible for you as a natural man.

#### XXXVIII

The “old man,” separated from God, cannot be master of his fate. The new man can be. He has God’s will in him. When we empty ourselves of self, His power, wisdom and love flow in. Through identification with Him, our better, higher Selves predominate. New wine flows into the new bottles. We are “abiding in the Vine.” Then, and only then, are we masters of our fate.

#### XXXIX

When we have put off the “old man” and

are living the new life, we have emerged from the darkness, and are living in the Light. Here, we find Love. It does not exist in the darkness. Love is the power—the power that saves. It is God's Love for us that saves us. It is Jesus' Love for us that saves. If you want to save anyone—Love them.

## XL

How can we follow Jesus' teachings and love others as ourselves? The "old man" cannot. He can try to. He can feel sympathy for those who, through ignorance or a lack of imagination, or intellectual pride, are separated from God, but he cannot love them.

It is God's Love pouring through the open channel of the "new man" that makes it possible for him to obey the Great Commandment. When we are living with God, we know that all people are like leaves on the same tree. An injury to one is an injury to all.

## XLI

God's will is often made known to you by His word as expressed in the Bible. You will find there His will as to your character.

As to your career—your activities—only the Holy Spirit—God—can direct you.

#### XLII

Jesus never taught that it was necessary for you to suffer in this world, or that you could only be happy in another life.

*Our* cross consists of denying our lower nature—of submerging our will to the will of God.

#### XLIII

Jesus promises you happiness greater than you can understand as a human being if you will *believe*—believe that you are a Living Soul and *can be* a Son of God. All His teachings centered on the thought that the Great Power was available for you—that you *could become* one with the Father—that if you would *let* Him, He would free you from being earth-bound.

Live in the Four Gospels and ask God to interpret them for you. For your own good, you can never surrender too much of your old self.

On the other hand, Jesus said that He came to bring mercy not sacrifice. He shows us the

way to obtain the greater by giving up the lesser.

## XLIV

The sin of Adam, and the sin of all of us, is failure *to believe*—failure to use our imagination—failure to “try Him.” If you try to hide from God—separate yourself from Him, you lay yourself open to all that can happen to the purely physical man—to all the forces of nature—to the “devils” of hate, lust and dishonesty.

## XLV

If you keep hold of the hand of God, *He will solve all your problems, or tell you how to do so.* He wants to help the sick as much as He wants to help sinners. Your difficulty will be in *letting* Him help you—in trusting—in getting even your anxiety out of the way.

## XLVI

When you surrender a problem to Him, you must not take it back. You must leave it there. You must not worry about it. You must think of Him instead—think of Him and pray for others.

It is not easy to think of anything else if you are sick, suffering, or hungry. But try it. Do your best to *concentrate on Him*. *Pray in* the Power to do so.

#### XLVII

Do not be resigned. Resignation is often laziness or cowardice. Do not seek martyrdom—suffering. If you do, you will probably find it. Look for that which is God's will for you. You can know that His will is that you should be perfect. "*Thy Kingdom come on earth.*"

#### XLVIII

Look for the Kingdom of Heaven within you here and now. Many have found it, and many are finding it every day. There are no worries. There are no worrisome responsibilities.

*Let Him "renew your mind."* Pray that you will be able to let Him renew it. Get rid of your intellectual pride. When you have succeeded in praying in His will, you will have a peace and joy that you would not have known it was possible for you to have on this earth.

## XLIX

Unfortunate inheritances of any kind, vice of any kind, illness of any severity, are as nothing to Him. Time and distance are as nothing to Him.

You *can* leave your problem to Him, if you concentrate your mind on Him; and pray for others; and work for others if He directs you to do so. That which you are doing for them, you are doing for Him.

At all times, your thoughts and feelings toward others must be as you know God wants them to be. He has forgiven you; you must forgive them. He loves them; you must love them.

"If thou bring thy gift to the altar," and remember any wrong done, or remember any resentment, right the wrong, or clear out the resentment, and then return to the altar.

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The submerged spirit in the "old man" cries out to God, and is unfolded by Him. God develops the acorn into the oak.

*Self* may still cry out in the "new man," but it is mastered by the power of God. The un-

derbrush in the forest dies when it is submerged by the oak.

First, a real recognition of our incompleteness as natural men; second, an affirmation of our oneness with Him when we have surrendered to Him.

## *WORKING WITH OTHERS*

### L

ALL sects and denominations point to God. They speak different "languages"—different "tongues." Work with the one who speaks your language—the one you can best understand.

Sometimes they misunderstand each other. One may say, sin is the dreadful reality. Another may say, there is no such thing as sin. They both mean the same. The former is looking at sin from the human standpoint. The latter is looking at it from the spiritual standpoint.

*All agree that the kernel of religion is doing the will of God.*

### LI

Books and the teachings of others are helpful in showing the way to find God. When you understand the way, be alone with God, and let Him be your instructor.

### LII

Beware of the instruction of those who have

not found Him. No one can teach beyond his own experience. Unless he has been born into the spiritual life, he cannot show the way to others.

"Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you."

### LIII

Beware of those who dilute the teachings of Jesus—who would have you act upon the assumption that you are a "new man" before you put off the "old man"—who would encourage you to "assert," or to "declare" before you are reborn.

Do not deceive yourself into believing that you are something which you know perfectly well you are not; you will have continuous disappointments if you do so.

Ask what you will, "*if ye abide in me,*" *that is,* if you are doing His will as to your *character and your activities.*

### LIV

Beware of those who would allow you to use them as a crutch. Beware of those who are trying to convince you as to their point of view rather than trying to bring you to God.

Beware of those who put their organization before the Sermon on the Mount.

God does not want you to make a plan for the salvation of the world. Your responsibility is to find out from Him, the use He wants to make of you, in His plan.

LV

Beware of those who tell you their way is the only way.

Rules as to character may be helpful, but beware of rules as to your activities. Your rules, your creed, or your organization must not be your God. They are for the purpose of helping you do the will of God.

"Jesus was better than others because He refused to listen to others, and listened at home."—Emerson.

LVI

It is a sin for you to judge others, and it is a sin (which you must forgive) for them to judge you.

It is a sin for them to lead you or guide you, after you have found God. Jesus is your leader. God is your guide. The Holy Spirit

in you—sent from God—will tell you the Truth, and He will comfort you.

#### LVII

Be sure that you understand the subject of the will. If you have a strong will yourself before you are reborn, it may be a handicap to you; it may be difficult for you to bend it so that you are willing to do the will of God. *Your* will must give way entirely to His will.

#### LVIII

If you can realize that you have been, or are sure to be, a spiritual *failure* as of yourself, you will find Him. You will be born again when you want the old man to die.

You can only find Him when you know your own unworthiness. A lack of humility will prevent a good man from finding Him.

#### LIX

When we are comfortable it is difficult to find God. We do not see the need of Him.

However, you will not find God even in despair, if that despair does not include the humility to listen and obey.

## LX

God does not want you to be in darkness.  
He does not want you to acquire bad habits.  
He does not want you to be sick.

You go through these things because of your  
faulty nature. He wants you to be perfect.

## LXI

He is *drawing* you to Him.  
He wants you to use Him.

He wants you to acquire strength so that  
you will know how to use the Power and Wis-  
dom He wants to give you.

## LXII

He wants you to be so that He can use you  
to fit into His plan.

He does not want you to swoon into a mys-  
tical nothingness.

He wants you to use more power and wis-  
dom and love in your humanity.

## LXIII

Beware of those who prate of sacrifice and  
suffering, or who even like to be called fanat-  
ics. Beware of those who take themselves too  
seriously.

Be reverent, but not solemn. Finding God is a joyous, not a mournful experience.

When you do His will you are only giving up a lower for a higher happiness.

Do not be frightened by words.

"To be crucified with Christ" means that you are to give up sin—"crucify" sin.

#### LXIV

The simplest definition of sin is that it is a stupidity.

God offered Adam the benefit of His Power and Wisdom and Guidance; but Adam was conceited and stupid, and thought he could do better with his own.

#### LXV

Beware of those who criticize other sects and denominations; they are directly disobeying Christ's commandments.

You will find individuals in all denominations uttering "vain repetitions." The hypocrite and the man with the closed mind (the Pharisee) are still with us. Pray for them.

Beware of those who are militant.

#### LXVI

If you have discernment and can see faults

in another, be pleased only because it gives you someone to pray for.

God helps *you* whether you deserve it or not.

#### LXVII

Do not pray God to change His mind. Pray that He will change your mind.

#### LXVIII

Use the language—the words of the sect in which you can think most clearly.

Your concern is to ask God to uncover your Better Self in order that you can obey your highest ideals.

Your duty is to realize that you are potentially perfect and to work toward becoming actually so. You cannot become perfect in this world, but you can be blameless. To be blameless is to *abide with Him*.

#### LXIX

Do not wonder that He speaks to you in a Quiet Voice. If His voice came out of the clouds it might overwhelm you, or inflate your ego.

It is through deflation that we come to know Him. If we have wandered afar sometimes

we wonder if the deflation will ever cease. It always does.

### LXX

We have nothing to fear when we are going towards God. It is when, in our conceit, we are going away from Him that we should be frightened.

### LXXI

Our surrender to God is not necessarily a surrender of external things.

It is a surrender of anything which is incompatible with doing His will—of anything that prevents our doing our duty. It is a surrender to obedience.

### LXXII

The Bible does not say that money is the root of all evil. It says that “*the love of money is the root of all evil.*”

You cannot serve both God and mammon, but you can make mammon serve God.

Jesus was rich. He could have anything He chose to have.

He had “nowhere to lay His head” because

He did not want it. He was not bound by any material chains.

#### LXXIII

The life of Jesus was not pathetic. It was glorious. He chose it because He loved mankind.

#### LXXIV

When we realize that Jesus was the Christ—the God—we see that His temptation in Gethsemane may have been that He should fail as a son of man and assert His Godhood; and that His temptation on the Cross may have been to come down from the Cross.

He failed neither God nor man.

#### LXXV

Do not allow anyone to put you into their mould.

God has a different mould for each one of us.

#### LXXVI

You cannot find the Light by pushing a button. You cannot find it merely by knowing it is there.

Jesus made the way perfectly plain. There is no short cut.

There are many paths leading to the Bridge to God, but we cannot cross it until we are *willing* to give up our own objectives, no matter how good and wise our objectives may seem to us. He asks us to put ourselves under His control and to take our orders from Him.

After we have done so we wonder how we could have hesitated.

The Light is a result of doing the will of God. Happiness is a "by-product."

It is when we most vividly realize the presence of God and of His available power, or realize the comparative nothingness of the evidence of our senses that His power flows most freely through us.

## *LOVE*

### LXXVII

WE CANNOT define God and we cannot define Love.

We do not know its "wave length," but we know that it is a Radiant Power.

### LXXVIII

St. Paul defined it as *containing* unselfishness, patience, kindness, generosity, humility, courtesy, good temper, guilelessness and sincerity. He draws a distinction between unselfishness and love; giving all of one's goods to the poor is unselfishness, but it is not necessarily love.

### LXXIX

It is God's love for us that draws us up from the mental physical plane into a greater understanding. When we have experienced this *change*, we love Him, because being changed, we are then capable of loving.

And we love Him also because He has

*saved us from an existence on a lower plane of happiness.*

#### LXXX

One can even be an agnostic and still love Jesus, the man.

Studying His life and teachings will make us love Him in a human way. There is nothing in His teachings that is not applicable today.

When we find the Father through Him, we love Him in a holy way.

#### LXXXI

There are some people for whom we could never feel any natural affinity.

People are often, partially at least, projections of ourselves. We usually have the traits that we dislike most in others.

We would not see their conceit and selfishness, unless we had these inherent in us.

#### LXXXII

On the human plane it is possible to be kind to everyone, but it is not possible to love everyone.

We may feel sympathetic toward a person whose life and sins have been similar to ours;

but we cannot understand the sins of another type. To understand is to forgive, but we cannot understand.

#### LXXXIII

It is not until we understand that sin is an unhappy separation from God, that we can as human beings understand loving all others.

It is only when we have found God that we are given the power to love them.

#### LXXXIV

When we have ourselves taken a long journey away from Him, and back to Him again, we feel sympathy for those who are taking steps they must retrace.

We love much because we have been forgiven much. We may love more than the "Elder Brother" who has not strayed, and who does not realize his potentiality for evil.

#### LXXXV

Strictly speaking, no man is our enemy.

Sin—the physical, conceited part of ourselves—is the common enemy of all of us. The more we love, the more we hate sin and love sinners.

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LXXXVI

We do not find God merely by believing in Him. He is only a Living Reality when we have done His will and have had an experience with Him.

If God is not guiding you, you have not found Him, or you have separated yourself from Him.

You will "know them by their fruits." If you do not love those who are stupid, stubborn, conceited, selfish and vile, you have not found God.

## LXXXVII

It is love that changes lives. It is love that saves.

We can only love when we have felt His love.

## LXXXVIII

Self-love must go.

Pride must go. Pride is often considered a worldly virtue. It is a spiritual vice. It is the antithesis of humility.

Remember, in your pride, "the root supports you, not you the root."—St. Paul.

## LXXXIX

Until we recognize that we cannot, aside from God, build a *permanently happy* life, we cannot find Him; until then, we have not learned to *see*—to perceive.

## XC

When we are abiding in the Vine, there is no separateness from God, and prayer is communion. As a branch of the Vine, God's love, wisdom and power flow through us.

## XCI

When we are a branch of the Vine we must not think primarily of the blossoms. We must concentrate on the sap—drawing on it, and visualizing the blossoms.

The sap is the Life. It is love, wisdom and power.

## XCII

Our limitations cease when we are united and made one with the Infinite. "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."—Jesus.

## XCIII

On the human plane we are wholesome when

we recognize our limitations and fulfil our needs.

When we have been born into oneness with God, St. Paul urges us "to stand and above all to stand."

#### XCIV

There are no short cuts and no roundabout paths to God. No study of mysticism, or even attempted obedience of the Commandments, will obviate the necessity of the surrender of our wills to Him,—the giving up of that which we have regarded as our right to ourselves.

#### XCV

The "recognition of our oneness with God" is sometimes merely an intellectual concept.

We cannot *be* one with Him until we are re-born and abiding in the Vine. The Light will not stream in, no matter how often we pray or affirm, if we are not willing to do His will. We have the right to affirm only when we are drawing on Him. Then it is our duty to do so. Our affirmations help us to realize that which we have become.

#### XCVI

Strictly speaking, we are that which we be-

lieve ourselves to be, but only God can change our beliefs. It is just as difficult to be born into a "new understanding," as it is to be born into a "new man." To be "saved from sin" or "saved from our false beliefs" mean the same thing.

## XCVII

Some of us, even though we are abiding, are apt to neglect to believe in and to use our power.

Some of us are apt to try to use power before we are abiding. "It is God who made the seed grow. . . . It is not your doing, but God's gift. . . . What do you possess that has not been given you?"—St. Paul.

## XCVIII

Jesus told us that we must "become as little children" in order to *understand*. St. Paul stressed guilelessness. The *way* to find God is so simple that the mature in knowledge have difficulty in believing it. Maturity of *wisdom* supercedes the shadow of *knowledge*.

## XCIX

"Ye shall know them by their fruits"—*by their spiritual fruits*.

Are you bringing others to God? Are you curing *sin*? Do you judge others? Do you love those who despitefully use you?

## C

The fruit of abiding in the Vine is the love that saves.

By a complete surrender of self to God you may become *the way* for others.

You may be able to help unhappy souls out of the hell in which they are living because of their unenlightenment.

*He whose will is merged with Mine will have My power.*

*Go preach the gospel.*

*Heal the sick.*

## *A "FORMULA" FOR FINDING GOD*

### **A SUMMARY**

1. BECOME *willing* to do His will; *willing* to obey Him as He speaks through your conscience; *willing* to follow His teachings; *willing* to obey Him, not only regarding your character, but also regarding your career and activities.

In short, you must become *willing* to do *anything* He asks you to do. There must be no reservations.

2. *When you have done this*, He will make His will for you known to you. He will use you in His plan for the universe when you are willing to give up your plan, and merge your will with His.

3. *When you are thus grafted—born—into the Vine, the love, power and wisdom of the Vine will flow through you. You will blossom and bear fruit by simply letting them flow.*

\* \* \*

Finding God does not depend on our sur-

roundings; it depends on our attitude of mind.

Humility is the key. We must *feel* humble because only then are we willing to learn and be guided.

Humility comes when we recognize our own inability to be and do that which at the bottom of our heart we want to be and do.

Humility is comparative. We cannot ourselves know if we are really humble—we can never “know ourselves.” Only God can make ourselves plain to us. Ask Him if you are humble.

### *PRACTICAL PROBLEMS*

If you have habits you cannot overcome—  
If you are sick—  
If you are poor—  
If you are unemployed—  
If you are unhappy—  
Ask God the reason.

When you are unhappy you can know that God is not having His way with you. Withdraw your will and ask Him to take possession of you and guide you.

God does not cause our suffering. We often cause our own suffering by our stubbornness—our unwillingness to do His will.

The knowledge that much of our suffering is not a necessary part of our life is one of the things that transfigures the world for us, when we have been born into a new understanding.

The pains of growth are felt less when we offer the least resistance. They are thorns which we learn to wear as a crown.

Peace comes when we are doing His will—

working according to His purposes. Going to church, taking communion, reading the Bible, doing what *you think* is right, and praying for help, is not enough.

Your prayers should be to search out the will of God. *You must ask Him if you are doing anything which is not His will for you, or if you are failing to do anything He wants you to do.* He will tell you if you really want to know.

You must see yourself as He sees you; you must confess your sins; and you must be repentant before you have the right to ask.

When we think we are not sinning, we do not see ourselves as we really are. When He enables us to see ourselves, we wonder at His everlasting love; and we realize that our questioning His justice disclosed our own ignorance.

The great essential is to get our relationship with God right. We have no right to expect an answer to our prayers if we are not willing to obey Him in every way.

It is when our situation is desperate that we

are most apt to find Him, because it is then we are most likely to be willing to yield to His will. He who has not known humility cannot be exalted.

Being lifted is the gift of God to those who trust Him. "Come unto me," and you will not be worried and fearful. Worry and fear are impossible where there is complete trust.

Empty your mind and soul to God. Relax. Get rid of all hurry or worry or tenseness, and listen to Him.

If you sincerely desire to break any habit you have formed, He will give you the power to do so. More than that, He will take *the desire* from you if you really want Him to do so. Habits are grooves worn in our brain. They are eradicated by neglect. When undesirable thoughts come to you, dismiss them and think of God instead. "Call upon the name of the Lord."

Do not confuse mental healing—healing by suggestion, or healing because of faith in the healer, with spiritual healing—healing by prayer.

Your most effective prayer for others is that they will seek God as a refuge, and become willing to do His will.

God may tell you why you are sick, poor, unemployed or unhappy. He will tell you what to do about it.

Then *do it* even if it seems to have nothing to do with your condition. If His guidance is clear, follow it even if it seems contrary to common sense.

*Rely on Him.*

Do not think of the illness, or poverty or unhappiness any more than you can help.

Our tendency is to think of our troubles and pray for His help.

Jesus tells us to reverse this order. He tells us to forget our troubles and concentrate on Him—on His power, wisdom and love.

He will solve your problems or tell you how to do so.

Get yourself out of the way, and let Him take the burden.

Pray for someone else. When Job was in trouble, God told him to forget himself and pray for his friends.

You may be confused by too much reading or advice or thinking. The remedy is the same: *relax*. Go alone with Him, and pray to know His will.

Your highest ideals are from Him. Realize it is God when He speaks to you. That "Quiet Thought" is God.

Anything difficult we are going through is because of a fault in us, or is necessary for our growth. Through suffering we learn to want to throw off that which is not Godlike.

The external disorder of our life is only the expression of our separateness from Him. Our unhappy experiences are because of something we have done or thought.

We can make a new beginning, not because of any power in ourselves, but by putting ourselves in His hands. Exhortation to a person to change himself shows ignorance.

God wants to rule you because He has to rule you in order to lift you to a higher plane. He cannot lead you if you have any reservations. "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Obedience is better than sacrifice.

You will find God when you have completely lost confidence in yourself; when you know you are lost without Him; when you realize you cannot change yourself by your own strength; when your ego is shattered; when you know that no road of your own will bring happiness; when you are willing to be clay in the hands of the potter. Humility is the Truth. It brings us to Reality.

Jesus healed disease by forgiving sin. It is when we have merged our will with the will of God that we have the right to ask. When we are abiding in the Vine, His power flows through us.

It is better for us to "enter into life halt or maimed" than to be physically whole and spiritually blind.

You will become free as soon as you let go of your problem and wait to be led by Him. You will receive as soon as you are capable of receiving. Christ will heal you then as quickly as you can believe He will heal you.

God, in Jesus Christ, became material in order to show us how to become spiritual. When we come to *know* that sin always brings

suffering, we become anxious to throw off our fetters and be free.

The more you expect from God, the more you will receive. He is best pleased when you ask most.

Do not hesitate to ask Him practical questions.

Jesus was the sanest man who ever lived. He was very practical; He healed the sick and fed the poor. He told us to do likewise.

Do not run ahead of His guidance.

Go quietly forward.

## *THE WORDS OF JESUS*

JESUS Christ was the Vine. We must be born into the Vine.

If we have not traveled far from the Father and are humble, our spiritual birth may be a gentle one.

If we have journeyed far away from Him, our second birth will be an acute one, especially if we are self-willed.

Why do we hesitate to be willing to do the will of God?

The answer generally is that we think we know that which is "good for us" better than He does.

We are *afraid* to trust Him.

We fear He will ask us to do something that will make us unhappy.

We will not believe that He knows best.

We may doubt that He loves us.

The best way of overcoming these thoughts and feelings is to study the words of Jesus.

FINDING GOD. "For every one that asketh

receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father."

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

"The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

LIVING WITH GOD. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you."

"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode in him."

"The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things."

"He that is of God heareth God's words."

"When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak."

*God has pledged His word that if you will trust Him and do His will He will guide you into peace and joy and a more abundant life.*

## AFTERWORD

*"Hundreds can talk for one who can think.  
Thousands can think for one who can see."*—  
Ruskin.

WE cannot define God. Logically, He is a self-conscious will, and as this constitutes personality, He is a person. To those of us who have found Him, He is the Father. He has given us a new heredity.

Many have refused to believe in God because they cannot see Him or define Him. This is anomalous, because even in natural science we deal with and use forces which we cannot see or define.

Without God, we lack perspective. Our intellect becomes our God, instead of our tool, and we get lost in a maze of intellectual processes. In the natural world, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as a fact. Each new fact may alter the facts that have gone before, and may be only the first of a new series of theories, and so *ad infinitum*. Our key often turns out to be another lock.

Reality can never be found through physical science because it does not exist on the plane upon which physical science operates.

When we have found God, the plane on which we are living is connected with a higher one. Most of us continue to think of the physical universe as *actual*, but when we have crossed the Bridge between the two planes, we "wear the world as a loose garment."

Having learned *to see*—to perceive that which can only be spiritually discerned, we no longer feel despair as to the natural world. *Through obedience* we achieve wider circles of understanding.

We realize that, although man was given dominion over the earth, he punishes himself by refusing to take orders from God. We see that, when he sets himself up as a judge in his own circle, and relies on his own unenlightened ideas, he widens the breach between God and man, and brings misery and physical suffering upon himself.

To those of us who have had vivid moments with God—to those of us who have been in the

grip of His wise love, nature still seems like a tragic mother, but God is a loving and wise Father. We know that He did not bring us here and abandon us.

He is helping us to avoid rocky coasts, and is leading us into lovely gardens.

"I am come into this world, that they which see not might see."—Jesus.